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Environment and sustainable development: implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

Report of the Second Committee*

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I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 100 (see A/54/588, para. 2). Action on sub-item (f) was taken at the 35th, 44th and 45th meetings, on 9 November and 1 December 1999. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/54/SR.35, 44 and 45).

II. Consideration of proposals

A. Draft resolution A/C.2/54/L.23 and A/C.2/54/L.50

2. At the 35th meeting, on 9 November, the representative of Guyana, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States" (A/C.2/54/L.23), which read:

> "*The General Assembly*,
>
> "*Recalling* its resolution 49/122 of 19 December 1994 on the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,

* The report of the Committee on this item will be issued in eight parts, under the symbol A/54/588 and Add.1-7.

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"*Recalling also* its resolutions 51/183 of 16 December 1996, 52/202 of 18 December 1997 and 53/189 of 15 December 1998,

"*Recognizing* that small island developing States face special challenges and vulnerabilities of both an environmental and economic nature in their efforts to achieve sustainable development,

"*Recalling* the Declaration and review document adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-second special session,

"*Noting* the significant efforts being made at the national and regional levels and the need for them to be supplemented by effective financial support from the international community,

"*Bearing in mind* the over three hundred projects which were presented for financing within the context of implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States at the small island developing States donors meeting held from 24 to 26 February 1999,

"1. *Reiterates* the significance of the effective implementation of the Declaration and review document adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-second special session;

"2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to transmit the Declaration and review document adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-second special session to the various organs of the United Nations system and the regional commissions and organizations, taking into account the areas identified in the review document for priority action, and urges them to take the action necessary for further implementation and effective follow-up;

"3. *Calls upon* Governments, the regional commissions and organizations and other intergovernmental organizations to take into account the areas identified in the review document for priority action, and urges them to take the action necessary for the further implementation and effective follow-up of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States;

"4. *Further calls upon* all stakeholders, in particular local communities, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, to take the action necessary for the further implementation and effective follow-up of the Programme of Action;

"5. *Emphasizes* the need for the provision of adequate resources for the further implementation of the Programme of Action;

"6. *Urges* the United Nations Secretariat, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and other relevant international organizations to work towards an early conclusion of their work on the development of a vulnerability index for small island developing States, and urges the Committee on Development Policy to review the criteria of least developed countries for consideration and decision by the General Assembly;

"7. *Calls on* the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to give substantive consideration in its work to the Declaration and review document adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-second special session, including in its preparations for UNCTAD X;

"8. *Invites* the Commission on Sustainable Development to integrate into its current and future work programme matters relating to the further implementation of

the Programme of Action, taking into account the report of the General Assembly on its twenty-second special session;

"9. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of future sessions, under the item entitled 'Environmental and sustainable development', the sub-item entitled 'Further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States';

"10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to it at future sessions a comprehensive report on the implementation of the Programme of Action."

3. At the 44th meeting, on 1 December, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Daúl Matute (Peru), introduced a draft resolution entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States" (A/C.2/54/L.50), which he submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/54/L.23.

4. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/54/L.50 (see para. 10, draft resolution I).

5. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/54/L.50, draft resolution A/C.2/54/L.23 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

6. The representative of Canada informed the Committee that his delegation would have joined in sponsoring the draft resolution before it became a Vice-Chairman's text (see A/C.2/54/SR.44).

B. Draft resolution A/C.2/54/L.60

7. At the 45th meeting, on 1 December, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Daúl Matute (Peru), introduced a draft resolution entitled "Promoting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development" (A/C.2/54/L.60), which he submitted on the basis of informal consultations.

8. At the same meeting, the representative of Barbados made a statement (see A/C.2/54/SR.45).

9. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/54/L.60 (see para. 10, draft resolution II).

III. Recommendation of the Second Committee

10. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

Draft resolution I
Implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 49/122 of 19 December 1994 on the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,

Recalling also its resolutions 51/183 of 16 December 1996, 52/202 of 18 December 1997 and 53/189 of 15 December 1998,

Recognizing that small island developing States face special challenges and vulnerabilities of both an environmental and economic nature in their efforts to achieve sustainable development,

Recalling the Declaration[1] and review document[1] adopted at the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly,

Noting the significant efforts being made at the national and regional levels and the need for them to be supplemented by effective financial support from the international community,

Bearing in mind the over three hundred projects that were presented for financing within the context of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States[2] at the meeting of representatives of donors of small island developing States held in New York from 24 to 26 February 1999,[3]

1. *Reiterates* the significance of the effective implementation of the Declaration[1] and review document[1] adopted at the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to transmit the Declaration and review document to the various organs of the United Nations system and the regional commissions and organizations, taking into account the areas identified in the review document for priority action, and urges them to take the action necessary for further implementation and effective follow-up;

3. *Calls upon* Governments, the regional commissions and organizations and other intergovernmental organizations to support the efforts of the small island developing States, taking into account those areas identified in the review document for priority action, and urges them to take the action necessary for the further implementation and effective follow-up of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States;[2]

4. *Calls upon* all stakeholders, in particular local communities, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, to take the action necessary for the further implementation and effective follow-up of the Programme of Action;

5. *Emphasizes* the need for the provision of resources for the further implementation of the Programme of Action;

6. *Urges* all relevant organizations to finalize, preferably before the end of 2000, the work on the development of a vulnerability index, in particular for the small island developing States, which would assist in defining the vulnerability of those States and in identifying the challenges to their sustainable development, for consideration by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly at the appropriate time;

7. *Welcomes* the acknowledgement by the Committee on Development Policy that the concept of vulnerability should be included explicitly in the identification criteria for

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[1] See resolution S-22/2, annex.

[2] *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[3] See A/S-22/4.

the least developed countries,[4] and notes the ongoing discussions on the new criteria proposed by the Committee;

8. *Calls upon* the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to give substantive consideration in its work to the Declaration and review document, including in its preparations for its tenth session;

9. *Invites* the Commission on Sustainable Development to consider in its work programme, as appropriate, matters relating to the further implementation of the Programme of Action, bearing in mind the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly;[5]

10. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fifth session, under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development", the sub-item entitled "Further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States";

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to it at its fifty-fifth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution.

Draft resolution II
Promoting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the principles and commitments enshrined in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development[6] adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, and the principles embodied in the Declaration of Barbados[7] and Programme of Action[8] adopted by the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States in 1994, as well as other relevant declarations and international instruments,

Recalling the Declaration and review document[9] adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-second special session,

Recalling also the relevant work done by the International Maritime Organization,

Taking into account all other relevant resolutions adopted by the General Assembly,

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[4] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1999, Supplement No. 13* (E/1999/33), chap. I.C.

[5] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-second Special Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/S-22/9/Rev.1).

[6] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum) resolution 1, annex I.

[7] *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[8] Ibid., annex II.

[9] See resolution S-22/2, annex.

Reaffirming the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea[10] and emphasizing the fundamental character of the Convention,

Taking note of the Cartagena Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region of 1983, which contains the definition of the wider Caribbean region of which the Caribbean Sea is part,

Considering that the Caribbean Sea area includes a large number of States, countries and territories, most of which are developing countries and small island developing States which are ecologically fragile and economically vulnerable and also affected by, *inter alia*, their limited capacity, narrow resource base, need for financial resources, social problems, high levels of poverty and the challenges and opportunities of globalization,

Considering also that the Caribbean Sea area, nearly all of which is separated from the open ocean by either continental or insular land masses, is characterized by a unique biodiversity and highly fragile ecosystems, such as the second largest coral reef system in the world, the heavy reliance of most States, countries and territories on their coastal areas and the marine environment in general to achieve their sustainable development needs and goals, the number and interlocking character of the maritime areas under national sovereignty and jurisdiction, which present a challenge to the effective management of resources, the intensive use of the Caribbean Sea area for maritime transportation and, notwithstanding the increase in the number of regulatory measures, the threat of pollution from ship-generated waste and from the release of hazardous and noxious substances in violation of relevant international rules and standards,

Emphasizing that the Caribbean countries have a high degree of vulnerability occasioned by climate change and variability, associated phenomena, such as the rise in sea level, the El Niño Southern Oscillation phenomenon and the increase in the frequency and intensity of natural disasters caused by hurricanes, floods and droughts, and that they are also subject to natural disasters, such as those caused by volcanoes, tsunamis and earthquakes,

Mindful of the strong interaction and competition among socio-economic activities in the countries of the region for the use of the coastal areas and the marine environment and their resources,

Mindful also of the efforts made by the Caribbean countries to address, in a more holistic manner, the sectoral issues relating to the management of the Caribbean Sea and in so doing to promote an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea in the context of sustainable development,

Noting the efforts of Caribbean countries, within the framework of the Association of Caribbean States, to develop further and seek recognition of the concept of the Caribbean Sea as an area of special importance in the context of sustainable development,

Cognizant of the importance of the Caribbean Sea area to present and future generations and its importance to the heritage, continuing economic well-being and sustenance of people living in the area, and the urgent need for the countries of the region to take appropriate steps for its preservation and protection, with the support of the international community,

Noting the problem of marine pollution caused, *inter alia*, by land-based sources in the Caribbean Sea area,

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[10] *Official Records of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea*, vol. XVII (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.84.V.3), document A/CONF.62/122.

1. *Recognizes* the importance of adopting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development;

2. *Encourages* the further development of the integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development, which will include environmental, economic, social, legal and institutional elements and will take into account the experience gained, as well as the provisions of Agenda 21,[11] the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,[12] the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly and the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, and in conformity with relevant international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea;[10]

3. *Calls upon* the Caribbean countries to develop further an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development;

4. *Also calls upon* the international community and the United Nations system, in particular the relevant agencies, actively to support efforts to develop further and implement the above-mentioned approach;

5. *Further calls upon* Member States to give priority to improving their emergency response capabilities and to increasing their participation in existing mechanisms so as to allow for a timely, effective and coordinated response to natural disasters and for the containment of environmental damage in the Caribbean Sea area in the event of an accident or incident relating to maritime transport;

6. *Invites* all parties concerned to take action, as appropriate, to address land-based sources of marine pollution;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session, under the sub-item entitled "Further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States" of the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development", on the implementation of the present resolution, taking into account the views expressed by relevant regional organizations.

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[11] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum) resolution 1, annex II.

[12] *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.